



March 2025

## Importing dogs and cats to Australia from the United States of America

Importing a dog or cat to Australia can be a complex process. You will need to **allow at least 6 months** to complete the required health checks, testing and paperwork. It is recommended you engage an experienced pet transport agent to assist you through the import process.

For the purpose of importing dogs and cats to Australia, the United States of America (USA) is classified as a Group 3 country. Our Group 3 [step-by-step guides](#) outline the import process in detail and will help you prepare your pet for import to Australia.

**Before you begin any pre-export preparations, it is strongly recommended you have your pet's identity verified by the competent authority in the USA, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Completing this optional step will reduce your pet's minimum quarantine stay in Australia from 30 days to 10 days.**

There are 3 parts to the identity verification process in the USA and you must follow the [USDA guidelines](#)

- Take your pet to 2 different USDA accredited veterinarians who work at different veterinary clinics. This can be done on the same day.
- Each veterinarian will scan your pet's microchip, take a photo of your pet and fill out an identity declaration form.
- The two identity declarations are submitted by the accredited veterinarians to the USDA's Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) through their Veterinary Export Health Certification System (VEHCS).
- An official USDA APHIS veterinarian will then collate the forms into a final document. They will digitally endorse the final identity declaration and email it directly to our department for processing.

### All veterinary preparations must be done by a USDA-accredited veterinarian

#### **At least 180 days before export, arrange identity verification, [rabies vaccinations and testing](#) for your pet**

After your pet's identity has been verified and they have been vaccinated against rabies, you need to arrange a rabies neutralising antibody titre test (RNATT). The RNATT is a blood test that checks if your pet has developed sufficient protection against rabies from the vaccinations it was given.

Once you receive the RNATT laboratory report with an acceptable result (0.5IU/ml or more), you need to obtain an RNATT declaration from the USDA that verifies the test results.

Following a valid RNATT, your pet must complete a 180-day waiting period in the USA or another [approved country](#). Your pet will be eligible for export to Australia 180 days after the RNATT blood sample arrives at the laboratory.

Your pet must maintain a valid rabies vaccination status from the time the RNATT blood sample is taken until the date of export. If your pet requires a rabies booster vaccination prior to export, the vaccination must be given on or before the booster due date.

**Apply for an import permit**

Once you have your RNATT laboratory report and RNATT declaration, you can apply for an [import permit](#) through our system [BICON](#). Import permits are valid until the RNATT expires, which is 365 days from the date the blood sample was collected. For further information on this process, please see: [How to apply for a permit](#).

**Make a post-entry quarantine (PEQ) reservation**

Once you receive your import permit, you can make a reservation for our [post-entry quarantine facility](#) through the [Post Entry Biosecurity System \(PEBS\)](#). After your PEQ reservation has been confirmed, you can book travel for your pet. Please note that your pet must arrive directly into Melbourne International Airport.

**Within 45 days before export**

Complete all remaining veterinary preparations within 45 days before export. This includes internal and external [parasite treatments](#) in dogs and cats, and additional vaccinations and testing in dogs for diseases such as Canine Influenza Virus, Leptospirosis, Leishmaniosis and Brucellosis (if not desexed). Please refer to your import permit for the specific conditions your pet must meet for them to be eligible for import to Australia.

**Within 5 days before export**

Once all veterinary preparations have been completed and within 5 days before export, your pet must have one final pre-export clinical examination. During this visit, the USDA-accredited veterinarian must complete a veterinary health certificate for your pet. An official USDA APHIS veterinarian must endorse the veterinary health certificate and upload it along with all other export documents to VEHCS.

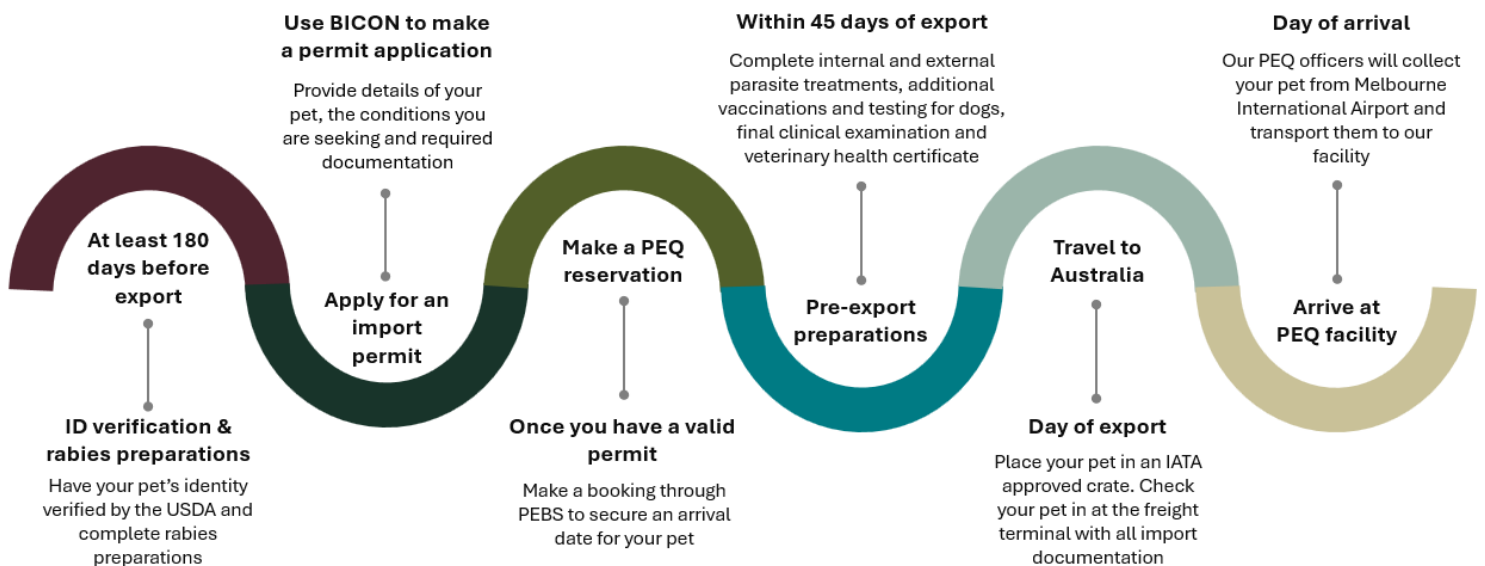
**Day of export**

On the day of travel, you must place your pet in an [International Air Transport Association \(IATA\)](#) approved crate with all the required documentation attached to the outside of the crate.

**Arrival in Australia**

Biosecurity officers will collect your pet from Melbourne International Airport upon arrival and transport them to PEQ. Within 24 hours of arrival, you will be notified via email that your animal has arrived safely.

**Timeline for an animal exported from the US to Australia**



## More information

- The International Pet and Animal Transportation Association (IPATA) can assist you with [finding a suitable pet transport agent](#)
- Our [webpage](#) and [step-by-step guides](#) provide detailed information for Australian biosecurity requirements for cats and dogs entering Australia
- If you have further questions about importing a pet, email [imports@aff.gov.au](mailto:imports@aff.gov.au)

Please note: The department reviews and updates import conditions as biosecurity risks change. The current policy may change whilst you are overseas with your pet. We recommend that you check our website regularly for up-to-date information.

### Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the continuous connection of First Nations Traditional Owners and Custodians to the lands, seas and waters of Australia. We recognise their care for and cultivation of Country. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and recognise their knowledge and contribution to the productivity, innovation and sustainability of Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries.

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